

Time Referents in *The Regiments of Princes*

There are lots of ways in which moments, durations and sequences are marked in Hoccleve's text. Quantity, though, is not the only significant feature: there are also some very distinct patterns concerning the type and location of the referents in the text. As such, below is a database of all such markings in *The Regiment of Princes*.

Rationale of Database

But why should we be interested in a list of all of the time markings in this text? After all, every narrative is structured by conceiving and inhabiting rhythms of time that vary in tempo and intensity, and through framing, sequencing, synchronisation and duration. We could claim this chart of time referents has been motivated by the relative paucity of literary reference guides or scholarly apparatus (beyond bibliographies and biographies) for fifteenth-century literature, despite the burgeoning critical interest that has developed in the last few decades. However, there is a more specific reason as to why this kind of research tool is of value to this specific text. Hoccleve's text is marked with a desire to understand, to experiment and to question the versatility of roles that time markings can play. The micro referents (listed below) unfold into a macro narrative concerning the poet's understanding of time in poetic process.

Definition of Time Referents

The first thing to establish is what is meant by 'micro time referents'. The ceaseless transformations in which nature is engaged – alternations of day and night, of the seasons, of birth to death, of wakefulness and sleep, of the lunar and solar phases – are in any age, in any society, reckoned and managed by devices. The nature, extent and combination of multiple coordinates of time allow for multiple and specifically context-dependent methods of arranging the narrative of time. Measurements of time require an examination of the small-scale impact that individual expressions create, and an investigation of the ways in which repeated use or varying functions of referents contribute to moving the narrative along in a particular, or in multiple, directions. These referents can be described, for instance, as regnal, calendrical, seasonal, mechanical; or as subjective and objective, traditional and modern, functional and aesthetic, structural and descriptive,

communal and personal. These labels are not used to imply formulaic categories of medieval perceptions of time. There is no blueprint for exploring micro expressions of time. In one part of the poem a type of referent – such as a tide, a seasonal reference or astrological calculation – can have multiple functions. Rather, each micro expression of time can only be described in relation to its context, to the occasion, in which it is used. To that end, a simple list of the referents does not suffice for this database; an indication of the narrative context (the place where it is used and its effect on the narrative) also accompanies each referent.

Origins of this Database

This database is the result of research I undertook to write the book *Imaginations of Time in Lydgate and Hoccleve's Verse* (Ashgate, 2011). However, there was no place within the book to include this list of referents and to that end this digital resource provides an ideal home. This list is intended as a research tool for further studies to be undertaken.

A Summary of Hoccleve's Temporal Consciousness

In my published study, I concluded that Hoccleve considers the paradoxes of viewing time as an ordering tool while being uneasy about the nature of temporal representation. The time strategies employed by Hoccleve can be characterised as the centrality of consciousness of time in the construction, and the poet's anticipated reception, of his work. Narrative framing devices and hermeneutical reading habits (involving past and present times, in both the readers' time and fictional time) reveal the interpretative act as contextual, thereby demonstrating a keen awareness of temporal specificity.

Hoccleve's interest is in what Mark Currie has described as the 'correlative issue' in 'which the present is experienced in a mode of anticipation'. Currie explains:

Narrative is understood as retrospection more readily than it is understood as anticipation, but it cannot really be one without also being the other. If, in order to look back at what has happened, we tell a story, we must also know that the present is a story yet to be told.

The present is the object of a future memory, and we live it as such, in anticipation of the story we will tell later, envisaging the present as past.

(Mark Currie, *About Time: Narrative, Fiction and the Philosophy of Time*, Edinburgh, 2007)

Although Currie is outlining his theory in relation to modern novels, this emphasis on the present as an anticipatory experience is a useful way to understand Hoccleve's artistic negotiations with temporal structures. In Hoccleve's work there is an overwhelming sense of living within the present in anticipation of the story. In *The Regiment of Princes*, this takes the form of an exchange between an Old Man and the Hoccleve-narrator: the narrator is trapped in his present consciousness with anxieties about the past and his future potential impinging on his current behaviour. Simultaneously, our consciousness of the advisory text that is to follow undermines the didactic reading strategies on offer. Thus temporal consciousness of the processes of interpretation in the Prologue complicates and undermines the universalizing effects of the indefinite time referents in the text-proper. In drawing our attention to how the present is a story yet to be told, Hoccleve gives voice to cultural anxieties about the unease of representations in time, of time management and of the ambiguities in processes of recollecting time.

However, while I have provided one reading of Hoccleve's temporal strategies there are many more readings that can be made. To that end I have provided this digital archive with the concordance of list of time markings that I compiled in my research.

Scope of database:

This concordance lists all forms of time markings in the *Regiment of Princes*. Time referents have been understood as the micro markings that mark moments and durations (precise and abstract, objective and subjective) of people, nature and civilisations. Included therefore are: seasonal markings, astronomical, solar and lunar, astrological, planetary and zodiac, liturgical, prophetic, subjective, relative, objective, mechanical, historical, memorial, mnemonic and structural narrative time markings. Such a list of 'types' of referents is not intended to suggest a schematic construction or perception of time. Similar time indicators sometimes operate in different ways. Such findings disclose how time indicators act as significant micro structures,

playing active, integral and occasionally dynamic roles in enacting the lessons of the narrative. I hope making the list below available will allow for yet more patterns to be discerned.

How to use the database

Listing time markings chronologically as they appear in *The Regiment of Princes* allows for an insight into Hoccleve's art in context dependent time expression. It also allows those scholars who wish to explore specific aspects of medieval time consciousness – whether it is a study of the memory or of astronomy for instance, to also use this aid.

Edition used

Ed. Charles R. Blyth. TEAMS Middle English Texts series. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1999.

Concordance of Time Referents in *The Regiment of Princes*

PROLOGUE

	TYPE	CITATION	Function
1	Abstract moment	'As I lay in my bed upon a nyght' L. 6	Specific place (Chester Inn) and time creates narrative context of entering dream.
2	Abstract duration	'And many a day and nyght that wikkid hyne' L. 8	Recollection of past duration starts to merge past and present times, acting as a descriptive tool of thought processes.
3	Memory	'Me fil to mynde how that nat longe agoo' L. 22	Remembers Richard II's fall, setting political time of narrative.
4	Universal temporality	'Allas, wher is this worlds stablenesse? / Heer up, heer down; heer honour, heer reproof; / Now hool, now seek, now bountee, now mescheef, L. 47	To emphasise transitory nature of secular fortune
5	Past authority	'how in books thus written I fynde' L. 54	Authenticating strategy of narrative voice
6	Precise moment	'This ilke nyght I walwid to and fro' L. 71	Links back to opening of narrative, bringing reader into presence of the narrative moment that is a recollection
7	Abstract duration	So long a nyght ne felte I nevere noon' L. 78	Narrator's inability to sleep, due to dream setting
8	Subjective units	'As discordant as day is unto nyght' L.96	Speech on opposites, as narrator

	(of the temporal hours)		wants solitude not joy, analogy to discordant relationship between night and day
9	Time duration and abstract moment	‘Passe over; whant this stormy nyght was goon / And day gan at my wyndowe in to praye’ L. 113-14	Narrative return to L 78, the moment after the abstract duration of the night
10	Precise duration	‘By that I walked hadde a certain tyme, / Were it an hour I not, or more or lesse’ L. 120 – 1	Focus on precision here, sets narrative context of physical activity to begin after torturous night.
11	Age: youth	‘Thow nart but yong and hast but litil seen, / And ful, seelde is that yong folk wyse been’ L. 146 – 7	Old man generalising about young, inexperienced and seldom wise state to waking Hoccleve-narrator.
12	Duration	‘Petir, good man, thogh we talke heer tile eve, / Al is in veyn’ L. 180 – 1	Hoccleve-narrator tells Old Man there is no point in wasting time until evening talking, as in too much pain.
13	Age: youth	‘Aftir thy childish misreuled conceit, / Thow doost unto thyself harm and deceit’ L. 195 – 6	Old Man instructs Hoccleve-narrator to do as told and not be ruled by negative attributes of youth, and then will be cured.
14	Past authority	‘The Book seith thus – I redde it yore agoon’ L. 204	Old Man cites the authority of the Bible when advocating counsel.
15	Death	‘Byreven man his helthe and his welfare / And his days abregge and shorte his lyf’.	Solomon’s advice in form of warning of brevity of life, about the impending end of one’s time.
16	Duration	‘The love also seen men day by day’ L. 242	How the thought of death torments people in various ways. Duration and continuance conveyed here, with no satisfaction.
17	Duration	‘Thow seest al day the begger is releved’ L. 248	The Old Man suffers and endures.
18	Moment	‘Hy tyme it is to voide and lat him twyne’ L. 276	Old Man indicates to Hoccleve-narrator that this is the propitious moment to expel such thoughts.
19	Moment	‘Unto the day he clad were in his grave’ L. 303	This moment brings the closure of the narrative episode of burning of the Lollard of John Badby (which helps date the poem), which enables the commentary on the event to begin.
20	Age: old	‘This olde dotid grisel halt hym wys’ L. 401 – 5	Old Man reckons he has made good sense, and lists positives of the mind in old age (in lines 402-5), emphasising that the negatives are only in relation to the physical body.
21	Past authority	‘In days olde, whan ...’ L. 491	Narrative linking unit
22	Moment: abstract	‘As men dide in old tyme’ L. 509	Lament on evils of wasteful fashion (dress)
23	Age: young and old	‘Thogh I be old and myn array untheende, / For many a yong man, woot I wel certeyn, / Of corage is so prowde and so hauteyn / That to the poore and old mannes doctryn / Ful seelde him deynth bowen or enclyn’ L.	Old Man pleading with young Hoccleve-narrator to listen, but recognising inability of youth to do so. Oppositions between the two age states listed here; with physical

		556 - 60	appearance of Old Man being presented in negative terms but emotional index of youth being condemned.
24	Age: old age and then youth	<p>‘Senek seith, age is an infimitee/ That leche noon can cure ne it hele, For to the deeth next neigheburgh is he. Ther may no wight the charter of lyf ensile; The ende is deeth of male and of female Nothyng is more certeyn than deeth is, Ne more uncerteyn than the tyme, ywis. L. 561 – 7.</p> <p>L. 567 – 57 ...</p>	<p>Age and death,</p> <p>Negatives of old age Issue of temporality, and, in turn, temporal consciousness, increases with age. As passage progresses moves onto positives of old age – wisdom, humility in poverty etc, in contrast to the follies of youth..</p>
25			Youth’s follies.
26	Moment in youth: abstract	‘pleide at dees whil the nyght wolde endure’ L. 627	Subjective: In youth played with dice, night-time subjective and judgemental.
27	Duration	‘I spende an hundred mark by yeer’ L. 645	Relative marker, used by Old Man to indicate length of time misspent in youth.
28	Duration	‘And yee res fele I continued so’ L. 655	Comparative marker, used by Old Man to emphasise duration he was uncommitted (no wives or girlfriends).
29	Temporality	‘O Lord, this world unstable is and unsad;/ This world honoureth nat mannes persone/ For himself, sone, but for good 6lone’ L. 705 – 9	Old Man’s lament on worldly goods, recurring theme of world’s mutability invoked.
30	Duration	‘A! Lord almighty, in my lyves space’ L. 740	Old Man asks for repentance, time measured as space.
31	Speed time passing	‘I cowde of youthe han talkid more and told / Than I have doon, but the day passith swythe’ L. 743 – 5	Old Man’s closing remarks. Moved from large-scale generalisations on youth and old age to focus on the particular passing for this one individual: frames the narrative.
32	Causal connection	‘I preye yow and byseeche, / What I first to yow spak, be nat displesid’ L. 753 – 4	Hoccleve-narrator begs Old Man to pardon him for not listening earlier. Refers and links back to previous part of the narrative.
33	Age: old	‘Of love which to agid folk yee have/ ... The lak of olde mennes cherisshynge/ Is cause and ground of al myn hervynesse’ L. 790. 93 – 4	Hoccleve-narrator says he loves old age and laments he lacks any nurturing from elderly.
34	Quantified duration	‘have twneti yeer / And foure come Estren, and that is neer’ L. 804 – 5	Hoccleve-narrator declares he has been at the privy seal office for 24

			years. Increased precision of duration links to focus on the individual (rather than the personified abstract).
35	Duration	‘that is fair tyme; / The tokne is good of thy continuance’ L. 806 – 7	Old Man remarks that Hoccleve-narrator has endurance.
36	Future and different time dimensions (of fictional narrative and of real author)	‘But how I shal be gyed / Heeraftir, whan that I no longer serve –/ This hevyeth me so that I wel ny sterve/ ... Now God helpe al, for but he me socoure,/ My future yeeris lyk been to be soure’ L. 831 – 3, 39 – 40	Query as to how Hoccleve will get paid in old age ... now time of the author rather than of the narrator, but within the narrative creating relationship between poet and prince
37	Temporality of world	‘Ther preeve I shal the mutabilitee/ Of this wrechhid worlds affection,/ Which, whan that youthe is past, begynneth flee’ L. 848 – 50	Comment that when he doesn’t work he loses all.
38	Future prediction	‘I drawe shal withyn a yeeres fewe./ Upon this woful thought I hake and hewe/ And muse so that unto lyte I madde,/ And lever die than liven I hadde’ L. 928 – 31	Feeble soldiers show Hoccleve-narrator what he may be soon. A prognostication (of sorts).
39	Age: old abstract	‘Two parties of my lyf and mochil more/ I seur am past been – I ne doute it noght;/ And if that I sholde in my yeeres hore’	Hoccleve-narrator fears he won’t get his dues when he is old.
40	Age schemes	‘with him stroglið nevere in the grennesse/ Of youthe – that mutacion and chaunge/ Anothir day me seeme sholde al straunge’ L. 964 – 6	Hoccleve narrator contemplates on having had no struggles in youth and fears this is temporary, fears destitution in old age.
41	Duration: quantified	‘What man that three and tweti yeer and more/ In wrytynge hath continued, as have I’ L. 988 – 89	Duration of being a writer, or ‘artificer’ (L. 1009).
42	Demarcation of past and present	‘but now adayes men/ Yerne and desyrn aftir muk so sore/ That they good fame han leid a water yore’ L. 1123 – 5	Old Man uses past to unfavourably compare present standards of virtues, especially virtue of poverty.
43	Fortune	‘A potter was my fadir ... Fortunes variaunce I drede alway;/ Right as shee made me to clymbe on highte,/ Sodeynly so shee may me make alighte’ L. 1136 – 41	Wheel of Fortune, mutability invoked in image of pottery making.
44	Moment (time measured as space)	‘Sires, it is tyme that we hens hie ... Withynne a litil space/ Aftir they were agoon’ L. 1274, 1277 – 6	Ambrose desires at a propitious time to leave Rome and the rich are killed.
45	Temporal world	‘thow art here in this world transitorie’ L. 1292	Worldly life is a cherry-fair.
46	Named moment: Judgement Day	‘O day shal come ... What the day comth of ire and of vengeance’ L. 1399	Richness is poverty and poverty richness, as evidenced on Judgement Day. There is repetition of the fateful day, creating an accumulative sense of impending moment.
47	Abstract moment	‘What thow God hast agilt in tyme past’ L. 1399	Request to allow Hoccleve-narrator to correct his past faults. Abstract reference to past creates a general/

			‘universal’ narrative context (but still as determined within timescale of the individual narrator, who is serving as Everyman).
48	Season	Al out of sesoun/ They knyth been that into wedlock so sterte’ L. 1399	Rich marry off their young for money, not love. This is presented as being out of accord with the natural world of the seasons, ie nature and the natural order.
49	Quantified unit	‘I every day heere at the Carmes messe,/ It faillith nat, aboute the hour of sevene’ L. 2007 – 8	Hoccleve and Old Man will meet soon (Old Man is always at Whitefriars at 7am). This precision in place and time follows L. 1926-7, where we assured that the greatest desire in writing is truth, not flattery. This signifies a shift and change: the text-proper is to start. The time referent acts as a shaping device of the narrative structure.

PROEM

	TYPE	CITATION	FUNCTION
50	Age state: childishness and Past authority	‘...of Gyles of Regiment/ Of Princes, plotmeel thynke I to translate/ ... With my childhede’ L. 2052 – 3, 2058	Hoccleve-narrator names his source (as Egidius Romanus) and invokes the modesty topos, lamenting his immaturity as a writer in contrast to his past authoritative source.
51	Precise moment (within narrative context of prince’s time)	‘what yee been in chamber at eeve,/ They been good for to dryve foorth the nyght;/ They shal nat harme if they be herd aright’ L. 2140 – 2	Hoccleve-narrator tells the prince the worst that his Regiment (the text-proper that is to follow) can do is give him something to pass his time at night.

Text-proper

	TYPE	CITATION	FUNCTION
52	Abstract past authority	‘Ones there was a kyng, as I have rad’ L. 2171	Lesson: faith must be kept by kings. It is not important who the king of the past was or when, it is that a causal link is being created between poet’s function and prince’s function.
53	Abstract past authority	‘In name of Jhesu, wirke after the avys/ That I compile out of these auctours olde’ L. 2187 – 8	Function of historicity highlighted again, at the end of this first section. It acts as a kind of narrative punctuation.
54	Age: negatives of youth and old age	‘We Romans that they han in prison loke/ Been but yong froth, unlearned in bataille,/ And othir folk with age ybroke’ L. 2269 –	Roman prisoners are not worth exchanging with Carthaginian ones due to age, either to young and

		71	inexperienced or broken with old age.
55	Age: middle age	‘Your prisoners ben mighty men and wyse,/ And folk in armes preeved at devyse’ L. 2275 – 5	Middle age, in effect, becomes the positive force.
56	Causal	‘I trowe now adayes, thogh men soghte,/ His heir ful hard were in this land to fynde;/ Men list nat so ferfoorth to trouthe hem bynde’ L. 2287 – 9	The Englishmen do not like Regulus, who died to keep his oath. The time referent here creates a link between the tale of the past and the point on reflecting on it in the present.
57	Abstract moment	‘Valerie tellith how with greet array/ King Alisandre and his oost on a day’ L. 2300 – 1	Alexander once besieged Lampsacus, his old master. Day unit abstract, only needed to create a new narrative setting.
58	Abstract moment	‘but on a day’ L. 2591	Moves from moral discussions about justice to a past example, talking of the children as hostages. Abstract day used for narrative frame.
59	Abstract past and interplays of narrative times	‘as I have rede’ Mixing past reporting with direct speech. L. 2640 – 66	Frequent references such as those listed here across these 26 lines. Overall effect is to emphasize Hoccleve as a narrator/ reporter.
60	Subjective moments	‘This leche unto Fabrices hous hy nyght/ As pryvely as that he cowde’ L. 2661 – 12	Fabricus plans to poison Porus ... ill deeds happen at night.
61	Abstract date	‘Ther was a lawe ymaad upon a tyme/ At Rome, by the consules assent’.	A law was once made (precise date not significant) when the Roman consuls agreed that adulterers should lose their eyes.
62	Abstract period	‘an emperor in dayes olde’ L. 2857	Time and person both abstract, as lesson is a universal one.
63	Abstract date	‘Whilom ther was a tyrant despitous’ L. 3004	Abstract time and identity, to reinforce universality of moral.
64	Abstract moment	‘in a tyme in the feeld with his hoost’ L. 3250	Abstract time and place of Alexander’s meeting in a field. Again time indicator a tool to move narrative along.
65	Age: old	‘An aged knight of his, for verray cold,/ His lyfly might yloren hadde almost ... olde knight ... Distressed knyghtes’ L. 3251 – 2, 3256 and 3261.	This is not a description of Alexander’s knight, but rather a description of Alexander’s worthiness, as evidenced by how the natural negative and physical indicators of old age are protected by Alexander.
66	Age: youth	‘a yong doghtir hadde, a fair may’ L. 3427	Pisistaris has a daughter, positive beauty of youth praised.
67	Sequence	‘The nexte day aftir’ L. 3557	2 sons want to kill Arispus, but the day afterwards Arispus repents.
68	Age: precisely quantified	‘Whan he was twenty yeer and four of age,/ And by prowess and by manhode and might’ L. 3677	Africanus goes to Scipio when he is 24 years old for a test of his chastity.
69	Subjective moment	‘By nyghtirtale he slayn was by King Darie’ L. 3849	Drunkenness caused Belshazzar his life: ill deeds happen at night-time.

70	Duration	‘Of fool largesse wole I talke a space’ L. 4180	Start of John of Canace’s trickery of his daughters. Time indicated as a measurement of space.
71	Duration: precise	‘no loner ne more/ Than days thre, and he wolde it restore/ At his day’ L. 4211-13	A contract set up for the lending of his money: a precise time duration is the marker of the terms.
72	Moment	‘And on the morwe’ L. 4215	Abstract in expression but precise within narrative context, as a means to mark an alternation in setting, progressing the narrative.
73	Subjective moment	Repeated references to the ‘nyght’ L. 4221 – 28	Ill deeds happen at night-time. Repeated references build anticipation within the terms of the 3 day framework.
74	Propitious moment	‘on the morwe at the brood day light’ L. 4238	Moment of truth: light floods in
75	Past	‘yistirday’ L. 4275	Used to locate reflections within moment of previous narrative sequence.
76	Duration	‘Aftir this day .../ Til the day cam of the fadres dvyng’ L. 4313 – 14	A decisive new stage marked by this opening marker and closing marker of duration of John Canace’s life-time.
77	Season	‘In his welthe but a litel sesoun’ L. 4575	Warning that a king may destroy his subjects by avarice. The reference to seasons reinforces the temporality of worldly signifiers and riches.
78	Propitious moment	‘That man yborn is in a blessid hour’ L. 4684	Universal lesson: he who helps the unfortunate is blessed from birth.
79	Prudence	‘Of thynes past and been and that shul be;/ The ende seeth and eek meswrith she’ L. 4767	Universal lesson: the omnipotence and prudence of God.
80	Age: youth and old age	L. 4943 – 63	An extensive commentary on the relationships between these two states, returning us to the nature of the opening dialogues in the prologue. L. 4962 – 3 especially significant ... summarizes whole approach of let age rule and youth follow.
81	Abstract moment	L. 4971 – 2	Lessons applicable in all liturgical and secular times
82	Age: quantified	L. 5167 – 8	Duration of Christ’s life precisely quantified.

Bibliography

The titles below are divided into two sections. The first are studies on Hoccleve’s works and general studies on fifteenth-century literature. They do not have as their focus the study of time, but when studying the artistic strategies of Hoccleve’s markings of time, these titles have been influential in my consideration of

his writing style. (My study was dated 2010). The second section acts as an indicative bibliography of some of the most influential studies on time in the medieval period, with a particular focus on studies that treat time as a cultural construct, as literary strategy, or linguistic influences.

Section One: Hoccleve and General Studies

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